第２話 中編

Op

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WHEN DARKNESS FALLS,

THERE IS A BEAUTIFUL MONOCHROME WORLD OVER THERE.

夜明至の色のない日々

-story-

The freelance insurance investigator Yoake Itaru receives a request to investigate the cause of a traffic accident. It's one of those frequent accidents where a car hits and runs over a pedestrian at a rainy night on a road with bad visibility. However, the testimonies of the victim, Hori, and of the assailant, Kiba, differ greatly from each other. Under what circumstances did the accident take place? In order to reveal the truth, Yoake continues his investigation.

ヨネダコウ

法律監修／日本橋小伝馬町法律事務所　弁護士 岡田友佑

AH
DON'T YOU HAVE TO WORK TODAY?
I START IN THE EVENING
HOW MANY PART-TIME JOBS DO YOU HAVE?
THREE
Ah-ahoo!
Ah-ahoo!
ARE YOU DOING WELL IN HIGH SCHOOL?
WELL... SO-SO.
IS IT A NIGHT-TIME HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM?
IT'S A CREDIT SYSTEM.
I SEE... LIKE THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM.
EVEN IF IT DOESN'T HURT, IT'S BAD, RIGHT? ISN'T IT INCONVENIENT?
IS YOUR LEG ALREADY ALRIGHT?
AS YOU CAN SEE, IT DIDN'T HURT FROM THE START.
WELL, I REALIZED SOMETHING WAS OOZING, BUT WHAT HAPPENED IS THAT I HAD BEEN STABBED WITH A KNIFE IN MY ARM. WOUNDS KEEP MULTIPLYING WITHOUT ME KNOWING
THAT'S CREEPY U ...

I haven't seen such a gentle colour
ISN'T IT BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS SAY TOO MUCH?
AH.
IS SHE PERHAPS TRYING TO IMPROVE MY SENSE OF PAIN?
HMM, IT'S A MYSTERY INDEED
YEAH, CHIAKI-SAN DOESN'T GO EASY ON YOU
SINCE IT DOESN'T HURT, I CAN ENDURE TAMABU-KURO-SAN'S VIOLENCE TOO. IT'S USEFUL.
I'LL TR...
ACHOO!
AH, IT'S NEITHER A COLD NOR HAY FEVER.
WHETHER HAY FEVER OR NOT, THAT'S DISGUSTING
ARE YOU KIBA-SAN? SORRY FOR TAKING YOUR TIME.
CAN WE DO THIS QUICKLY?
WHO'S HE?
HE'S MY ASSISTANT TAKAHIRA. IN THE FUTURE, HE'D LIKE TO WORK IN AN INSURANCE COMPANY. FOR LEARNING PURPOSES, IS IT FINE IF HE STAYS WITH US?
IT'S OKAY
NICE TO MEET YOU.

WELL, IF THEY HAD CROSSED AT THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON THE GREEN LIGHT, OF COURSE IT WOULDN'T BE THEIR FAULT.
BUT IT WOULD BE IF THEY DIDN'T WALK ON THE SIDEWALK, IF THEY IGNORED THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS OR IF THEY FELL ASLEEP ON THE ROAD.
THE ERROR RATE? IF YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S OBVIOUS. IT ISN'T AS IF THE OTHER PARTY MADE NO MISTAKE AT ALL.
THIS IS JUST AN EXTRA FORMAL INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE THE ERROR RATE, SO DON'T WORRY.
INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR YOAKE... THIS MEANS THE INSURANCE COMPANY REQUESTED YOU TO COME.
HOWEVER, I DON'T REMEMBER SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED THE LAST TIME I USED MY INSURANCE.

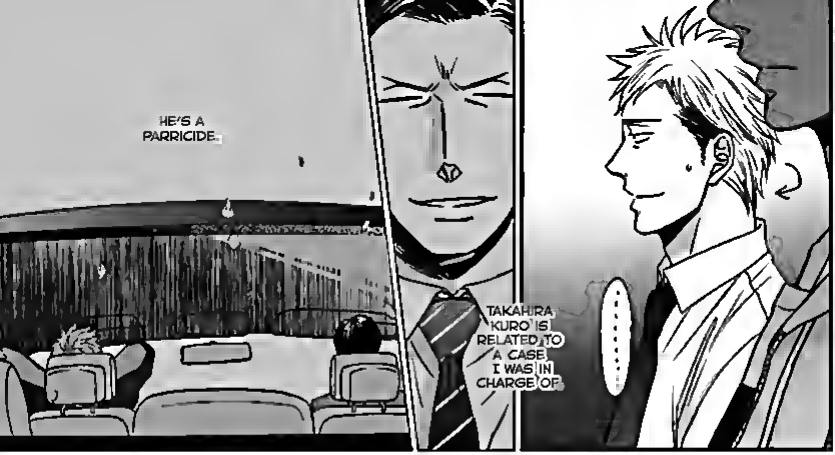
WHEN YOU EXAMINE THE CASES WITH PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF MAIN ROADS AND STREET LIGHTS, THERE AREN'T FEW WHERE IT'S THE DRIVER'S FAULT, AND THE OTHER WAY TOO.
【路上横臥の人身事故・基本過失割合】
歩行者
自動車
50(30)
50(70)
+10～20
+10
+10
+10
夜間(昼間)
幹線道路
児童・高齢者
THE RATE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE FOUND AT FAULT FOR LYING ON THE SIDEWALK AT NIGHT IS 50-50.
HOW MANY CASES ARE THERE WHERE THEY FELL ASLEEP ON THE ROAD AND IT'S DECIDED THAT IT'S THEIR ERROR?

WHEN THEY HAVE DRUNK, THE OTHER PARTY IS COMPENSATED ACCORDING TO THE EXTENT OF ERROR RATE, BUT...
THE INSURANCE COMPANY WON'T PAY FOR ALL THE INJURIES AND DAMAGES OF THE POLICYHOLDER. THERE'S ALSO AN EFFECT ON DETERMINING THE VERY ERROR RATE ITSELF.
!
BUT THIS ONLY APPLIES TO CASES WHERE THE DRIVER HASN'T DRUNK.
KIBA-SAN, YOU WEREN'T BADLY WOUNDED, AND THE ONLY DAMAGE WAS SOME SCARS ON YOUR CAR. YOU HAVE A VEHICLE INSURANCE, SO IT CAN BE REPAIRED

I'M AWARE OF THAT. HOWEVER, YOU DISAPPEARED FOR AT LEAST 2 HOURS FROM THE PLACE OF THE ACCIDENT.
THE INSURANCE COMPANY WANTS TO PROVE THAT YOU DIDN'T DRIVE DRUNK.
I WASN'T DRUNK. IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THE POLICE DIDN'T FIND ANY TRACE OF ALCOHOL. WHAT'S THE POINT OF TALKING ABOUT THIS NOW?
ISN'T IT EXAGGERATED TO TRY TO PROVE IT AGAIN? IN ANY CASE, IT'S A WASTE OF TIME.
IF YOU AGREE TO COOPERATE, WE'LL FINISH THIS QUICKLY, SO...
WELL, IF WE DON'T ATTEMPT TO GIVE CONSISTENCY TO ALL THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO DETERMINE THE ERROR RATE, SO...
THAT TOO... I TOLD THE POLICE THOROUGHLY ABOUT IT. THIS IS JUST GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES.
AH, AND THE OTHER PARTY, HORI-SAN, SAID HE WAS WALKING WHEN YOU RAN OVER HIM
PLEASE, EXPLAIN WHAT YOU WERE DOING THAT DAY BEFORE THE ACCIDENT
THAT DAY I FINISHED WORK EARLY, SO I DROVE TO THE SHOPPING MALL AT STATION A. IT WAS BEFORE 6 O'CLOCK.
I PASSED THROUGH THAT PLACE AFTER 8 O'CLOCK WHILE DRIVING BACK HOME
YOU WENT BACK HOME BY TRAIN ONCE, RIGHT? DO YOU USUALLY GO TO THAT SHOPPING MALL?
I ONLY GO THERE OCCASIONALLY. THAT DAY I WANTED TO BUY SOMETHING AND I DECIDED TO HAVE DINNER THERE TOO.
... I SEE
OKAY, WHAT SHOULD WE START WITH?

IT'S CALLED APOLLO.
REALLY? THAT'S A PITY. WELL, IF YOU COULD TELL ME THE NAME OF THE PL...
DO YOU HAVE THE RECEIPT OF WHAT YOU ATE?
I DON'T. I THR...N IT AWAY IMMEDIATELY.
SORRY AH, BY THE WAY, CAN I ASK YOU ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?
I SEE. I CAN WELL IMAGINE
I LEFT THE HOUSE LAST YEAR, SO YOU CAN GUESS WHAT HAPPENED

GOOD GRIEF SHE'S SUCH AN EGOISTIC WOMAN. EVEN THOUGH I PROVIDED HER WITH A GOOD LIVING, ONE DAY SHE SUDDENLY
I WAS WORKING SO HARD FOR THEM WITHOUT EVEN TAKING A REST...
WOW
AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO GUESS IT


HE'S A PARRICIDE.
TAKAHIRA KURO IS RELATED TO A CASE I WAS IN CHARGE OF.

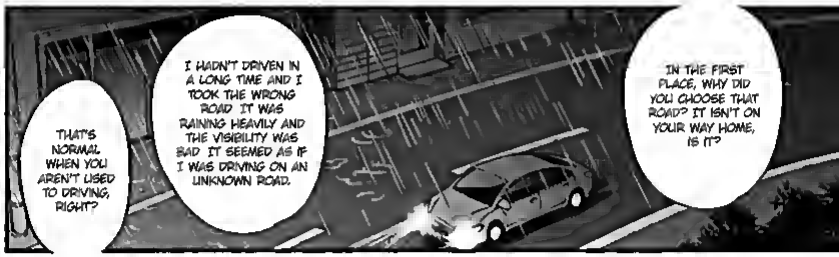
AND ABOVE THAT, HE HAS A STRANGE ABILITY

I'M AFRAID OF COURSE, ON WOULD FEEL ANXIOUS AFTER HEARING THAT IF I WERE A RESIDENT IT WOULD BE GREAT TO BE ONE'S FAMILY.
WE...
ARENT ALL LIVING TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FOR A WHILE?

NO, IT'S FINE.
THAT'S HOW THINGS ARE IT'S POINTLESS TO ASK MY FAMILY, BUT EVEN SO, DO YOU WANT TO SEE THEM?
He's quite troublesome sometimes
I'M SORRY BUT I'M NOT A MASOCHIST, NEITHER AM I KIND

ERR...YES. I'VE BEEN BUSY AND I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO PUT EVERYTHING IN ORDER AFTER SHE LEFT.
BY THE WAY, THE ONE ON THAT PICTURE... IS SHE YOUR DAUGHTER?

IS IT POPULAR?
SOME GIRLS OF MY CLASS DIDN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT IT. WHEN I SAW IT, IT LOOKED AS A MEAN OLD MAN.
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOU, BUT I'D LIKE TO FINISH SOON, SO CAN I GO ON?
AH, YES. THEN TELL ME ABOUT THE MOMENT YOU RAN OVER HIM.
AH.
...IT'S GOMATIN, RIGHT?
SHE'S A GIRL, THERE'S NO WAY THEY'D GIVE HER THAT NAME...
EEEH? HOW CAN YOU...
DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS, YOAKE -SAN?
THAT SEAL?
IT BELONGS TO MY DAUGHTER, SO I...


THAT'S NORMAL WHEN YOU AREN'T USED TO DRIVING, RIGHT?
I HADN'T DRIVEN IN A LONG TIME AND I TOOK THE WRONG ROAD. IT WAS RAINING HEAVILY AND THE VISIBILITY WAS BAD. IT SEEMED AS IF I WAS DRIVING ON AN UNKNOWN ROAD.
IN THE FIRST PLACE, WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THAT ROAD? IT ISN'T ON YOUR WAY HOME, IS IT?

I THOUGHT I MIGHT HAVE DRAGGED SOMETHING FALLEN ON THE ROAD
BUT AFTER A FEW METERS, IT GOT LIGHTER
THAT'S WHEN THE STEERING WHEEL SEEMED HEAVY
I WAS APPROACHING A GENTLE CURVE, SO I REDUCED THE SPEED TO 20-30 KM/H

I LOOKED AT THE BACK MIRROR, BUT I COULDN'T CONFIRM IT BECAUSE OF THE RAIN.
ONCE I GOT HOME I COULDN'T STOP WORRYING ABOUT IT, AND SINCE IT HAD STOPPED RAINING I DECIDED TO GO BACK TO THAT PLACE.
I THINK HORI-SAN WAS EITHER SLEEPING OR HAD COLLAPSED.
OF COURSE I WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT THAT PLACE IF I HAD KNOWN FOR SURE.
SO THAT MEANS YOU WEREN'T SURE ABOUT HAVING RUN OVER HIM UNTIL YOU GOT BACK TO THAT PLACE, RIGHT?
EVEN IF THAT HAPPENS, THE DAMAGE ON MY PART ISN'T SERIOUS AND MEDICAL EXPENSES ARE FINE
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THAT PERSON MUST BE WORRIED
BUT... WELL, THAT'S HOW IT WAS. IF HE HAD WALKED TILL THAT PLACE, IT WOULDN'T EVEN MATTER IF HE WERE TO GRUMBLE
ON THE CONTRARY, I WONDER WHY HE GAVE UP SO EASILY. IT SEEMS STRANGE.
ACTUALLY, THAT'S THE NORMAL ATTITUDE
MAKING SUCH A DISPLAY...
WHAT AN UNPLEASANT GUY. SAYING ALL THAT NONSENSE. NO WONDER HIS WIFE LEFT HIM!

★THIS IS A WORK OF FICTION. NO IDENTIFICATION WITH ACTUAL PERSONS OR COMPANIES IS INTENDED OR SHOULD BE INFERRED.

IF HE WASN'T DRUNK, WHY WOULD HE EVEN GET AWAY FROM THAT PLACE?
YEAH. THAT WAS A LIE. HE SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW IF HE HAD RUN OVER HIM, BUT HE DID AND EVEN SO HE RAN AWAY FROM THAT PLACE.
SAY, HOW WAS IT? DID HE LIE?
IS IT POSSIBLE THAT HE'S FEELING GUILTY FOR SOME REASON?
I WASN'T CRYING. DON'T FAKE THINGS AS YOU PLEASE.
ANYWAY, WE DON'T HAVE A PROOF FOR THAT YET.
THEN DON'T USE ME.
WEREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO WAS CRYING AT THE HOSPITAL ROOM?
I DIDN'T! IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, THEN DON'T TAKE ME WITH YOU...
TO BEGIN WITH, HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN WHAT YOU SAID ON THAT BRIDGE BEFORE?
Weren't you running despair thinking you were still young?
EEEHHH? REALLY? COULDN'T YOU PERCEIVE IT?
WAS HE DRUNK?
HMM... IT DIDN'T SEEM SO.

4500 YEN.
EH?
WELL WELL. YOU DID HELP ME, I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER NEXT TIME.
DO YOU THINK YOU'LL GET TO YOUR WORKPLACE ON TIME?
BARELY
THEN IT'S FINE.
IT ISN'T FINE. HAVEN'T I SAID I'LL BARELY MAKE IT?
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS, OLD MAN? IT'S MY HOURLY PAY!
It was 15 hours.
WHAT? DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WOULDN'T ACCEPT MONEY FROM ME?
STARTING OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT IS IMPORTANT, ISN'T IT?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.
WHAT A MISER!!
SHUT UP!
...ONE MORE THING.
WHAT IS IT NOW?
HASN'T YUKIWASA-SAN TOLD YOU ABOUT ME?

IF YOU WANT ME TO ASK HIM, I'LL DO IT.
Stares
WELL, IF HE KNEW, HE WOULDN'T TAKE ME WITH HIM.
I TOLD YOU I DON'T LIE. TRUST ADULTS, PLEASE.
IT REALLY IS INCONVENIENT WHEN I CAN'T SEE THE COLOURS.
AHHH WHO SAID IT?
"THE FIRST AND SIMPLEST EMOTION WHICH WE DISCOVER IN THE HUMAN MIND, IS..."
ADULTS ARE THE FIRST ONES I CAN'T TRUST.

CURIOSITY.

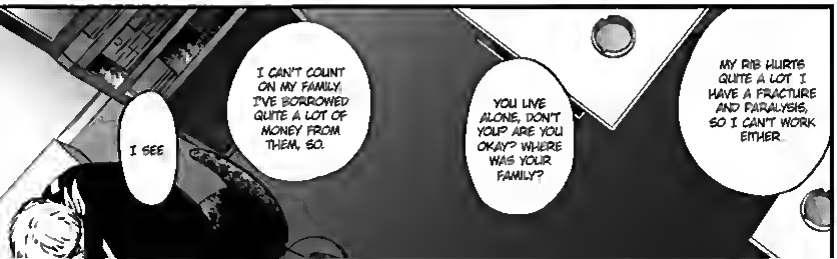
TAN Omuhayashi is a combination of Omurice and Hayashi rice.
ONE PERSON, OMUHAYASHI... ICED COFFEE...
HMM.
HOW IS IT GOING?
I SEARCHED THE FOOD AND NUMBER OF PEOPLE, BUT IT SEEMS HE WASN'T AROUND THIS TIME
IT ISN'T AS IF MEN DON'T COME ALONE TO EAT HERE BUT SINCE IT'S NORMALLY UNUSUAL, I'D REMEMBER IF HE HAD COME...
I HAVE 2 DIFFERENT SHIFTS A WEEK, BUT I THINK I DON'T REMEMBER HIM.
AH, IT'S FINE YOU ALREADY HELPED ME A LOT SHOWING ME THESE
HEY EMI-CHAN, YOU WERE HERE TOO, RIGHT? DO YOU REMEMBER THAT DAY?
EHHH?? THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I HAVE 6 SHIFTS EVERY WEEK, SO THERE'S NO WAY I'D REMEMBER WHO CAME 2 WEEKS AGO.
YOU'RE RIGHT
APOLLO RESTAURANTS ARE A CHAIN THAT HAS EXPANDED THROUGH ALL THE COUNTRY.
THE FLAVOUR OF THEIR OMUHAYASHI IS PRETTY NORMAL AND...
Thank you very much.
ADOO

I'VE ALREADY BEEN INFORMED BY THE DOCTOR IN CHARGE, SO I'LL BE GOING BACK TO THE OFFICE SOON, OKAY?
AH, YOU'RE STILL HERE THANKS FOR EVERYTHING
THAT'S CRUEL!
SAY, YOAKE-SAN,
WHO ARE WE GOING TO MEET?
HMM?
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS WHOLE TIME?
HMM...
EH?
Who's she?
I'M SORRY, RINKO-SAN.
I'M BUSY, SO JUST TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENED.
THESE ARE THE INJURIES OF A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT DO YOU THINK HE WAS STANDING OR SLEEPING? PLEASE, LET ME HEAR YOUR OPINION.
AH...
clonk

STATURE.
AROUND 160CM.
THE CAR
A SEDAN.
RIB FRACTURE
NERVE PARALYSIS.
HUMERAL DIAPHYSEAL FRACTURE.
AN INJURY CAUSED BY THE BUMPER OF THE CAR ON THE LOWER LEG
EH???
clonk
clonk
clonk
EH?
JUST... JUST THAT? WHERE'S THE EXPLA-NATION?
IT'S FINE. SHE SAID WHAT I NEEDED TO HEAR.

TOK
TOK
TOK
I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING...
DAMMIT...

BURP
WELCOME... EH? HORI-CHAN!? CAN YOU MOVE?
YOU HAD AN ACCIDENT, RIGHT?
I RECOVERED A BIT, SO I DECIDED TO COME AND SEE YOU.
SIT DOWN, SIT DOWN.


I SEE
I CAN'T COUNT ON MY FAMILY. I'VE BORROWED QUITE A LOT OF MONEY FROM THEM, SO.
YOU LIVE ALONE, DON'T YOU? ARE YOU OKAY? WHERE WAS YOUR FAMILY?
MY RIB HURTS QUITE A LOT. I HAVE A FRACTURE AND PARALYSIS, SO I CAN'T WORK EITHER.

AN INVESTIGATOR FROM THE INSURANCE COMPANY CAME RECENTLY TO MY HOUSE AND TOLD ME ABOUT IT.
IT IS... IF I HAD BEEN SLEEPING ON THE STREET, IT'D BE SAID THEY'D ONLY PAY HALF OF THE MEDICAL EXPENSES AND CONSOLATION MONEY.
IS THAT BAD?
BUT YOU KNOW, THE OTHER PARTY SAYS I WAS SLEEPING AND THAT HE DIDN'T SEE ME WHEN HE RAN OVER ME.
BUT YOU'LL BE FINE. WITH THE INSURANCE MONEY, YOU'LL RECOVER PERFECTLY. IF YOU ALSO GET A GOOD AMOUNT OF CONSOLATION MONEY, THEN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LIVE BETTER TOO, RIGHT?
BUT I WAS WALKING NORMALLY, I WAS WALKING ON THE SIDEWALK, YOU KNOW?
IT WOULD! IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE!
THUMP
OH, REALLY? WOULD IT GET THAT WORSE?
AH... PERHAPS I SHOULDN'T HAVE TALKED SO MUCH...
EH?
YOAKE-SAN... WAS HERE? DIZZY... HOW MUCH I DRANK... THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD HIM?
I THOUGHT YOU'D PROBABLY BE COMPENSATED AND I TOLD THE PERSON FROM THE INSURANCE COMPANY HOW MUCH YOU HAD DRUNK AND THAT YOU WERE DIZZY...
WELL, THAT'S... AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T BECOME A DISADVANTAGE I CAN'T BELIEVE HE WOULD INVESTIGATE THIS PLACE TOO...
I MEAN, THAT PERSON IS A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER.
HE'S THE ONE WHO MADE A MISTAKE, RIGHT? WHY DOES SUCH A GUY SAY I DID WRONG?
HORI-CHAN, I'M SORRY!

BUT YOU WERE WALKING, RIGHT? IF THAT'S SO, THEN IT'S FINE. I'M SURE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO PROVE IT!
.....
HMM... NOTHING IN PARTICULAR...
...YOAKE-SAN... DID HE SAY ANYTHING?

EVEN THOUGH I ASKED HIM TO HELP ME...

IN THE END, THEY'LL JUST GIVE ANY REASON BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT TO PAY THE INSURANCE MONEY...!

!!
HUM!
YOU'RE IN MY WAY.
Gaaah
BRRR...
CHIAKI-SAN. EVEN IF IT DOESN'T HURT, I DO FEEL THE IMPACT..
What's this? A cd!! sweet!
BRRR
DO YOU THINK YOU'LL FINISH YOUR INVESTIGATION SOON? I MEAN, WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PAY MY SALARY?
OH SORRY, THAT WAS THE PERFECT PLACE, SO I UNCONSCIOUSLY
I CAN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR SALARY, BUT I'VE FINISHED INVESTIGATING THE CAUSE AND SITUATION OF THE ACCIDENT.
THE PROBLEM IS THAT I FEEL THE POLICYHOLDER IS HIDING SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED BEFORE AND AFTER THE ACCIDENT
DON'T SAY YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT MY SALARY! CUT IT OUT!
DIDN'T THE POLICYHOLDER, KIBA-SAN, WORK IN A BANK?
IF HE DIDN'T DRINK ALCOHOL BEFORE THE ACCIDENT, WHAT ELSE COULD HE BE HIDING?
COULD HE HAVE DONE SOMETHING HE SHOULDN'T HAVE, APART FROM CAUSING THAT ACCIDENT? LIKE BURGLING OR STEALING PANTIES?

ISN'T IT? HE MUST HAVE A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.
IT CERTAINLY IS A CRIME HE CAN'T TELL OTHERS.
WHY DON'T YOU RESIGN YOURSELF TO IT?
I WON'T.
ARE YOU A CHILD?
I DON'T THI...
AH-CHOO!
YES, THAT'S HAY FEVER.
BUT YOU KNOW...
BEEH? WHY DO YOU KNOW ABOUT GOMATAN?
AH! THAT HOW WAS IT CALLED? GOMA...
YES, THIS IS THE INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR YOAKE...
AH, NUKUSHINA-SAN? YES, YOAKE-SAN IS HERE
Grapes
WHY SHOULDN'T I?
AH, NUKUSHINA-KUN? SORRY BUT I HAVEN'T FINISHED THE INVESTIGATION YET. CAN YOU GIVE ME MORE TIME?
Rub Rub
YES...
DON'T YOU DARE PLAY WITH MY GOMATAN

「Op～オプ～ 有明至の色のない日々」／つづく
次回は9月12日(火)発売の19号で！

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Searching for more helping hands!
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Op: Yoake Itaru no Iro no Nai Hibi

YONEDA KOU

CHAPTER 2, EPISODE 2

SCANS
SCULLY-FUJI

TYPESETTING
JASUMIN

TRANSLATION
TER

CLEANING
ERISUKI

QUALITY CHECKING
HARMONY